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ABSTRACT

Recent educational reform efforts have sought to restructure schools, changing the character of school culture and creating a need for a nontraditional approach to inservice teacher education. Inservice projects have been implemented which attempt to prepare practicing teachers for restructured schools and as participants in the restructuring process. This digest provides a brief overview of five emerging trends in inservice teacher education. Inservice programs are: (1) research based, reflecting a reform trend that roots school improvement efforts in theoretical soil; (2) preparing teachers to examine and assess their own practice, to become inquiring, reflective practitioners; (3) emphasizing collegiality; (4) preparing teachers to participate in decision making on varied school issues; and (5) helping teachers to qualify for professional advancement through differentiated staffing programs. (JD)

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ERIC DIGEST

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The Influence of Reform on Inservice Teacher Education

An outcome of recent educational reform efforts has been identification of characteristics in traditionally structured schools which are considered unfavorable for effective teaching, teacher empowerment, and development of professional status for teaching. As a result, reformers have sought to restructure schools to produce conditions that address these concerns. These restructured schools will make new demands on teachers, as well as provide them with new opportunities.

Restructuring schools not only changes the character of school culture, but also creates a need for a nontraditional approach to inservice teacher education. Ongoing professional development replaces the sporadic, short-term staff development activities that constitute typical inservice education at present (Holmes Group, 1990).

Restructuring proponents maintain that traditional teacher education programs have done little to prepare teachers for either the demands or opportunities of restructured schools (Levine, 1988; Mahlios et al., 1987). Just as restructured schools are an unrealized goal of the reform movement, reformed inservice education is also a goal rather than a reality. However, scores of inservice projects have been implemented which attempt to prepare practicing teachers for restructured schools and as participants in the restructuring process. While a great deal of diversity exists among these programs, certain themes are emerging.

Emerging Trends in Inservice Teacher Education

- ***Inservice programs are research based, reflecting a significant reform trend that roots school improvement efforts in sound theoretical soil*** (Tuthill, Seidel, and McClure, 1987; Hall, 1986; Weil, 1985). There has been a shift from a deficit model of staff development, emphasizing remediation, to a developmental model, emphasizing growth. This model is based on the nature of adult learning and developmental stages (Hall, 1986). An example is the Wake County (NC) Program which bases its model for mentor teacher preparation on Joyce's training model (McNair, McGee, Timberlake, Hines, and Reiman, 1987).

- ***Inservice programs are preparing teachers to examine and assess their own practice, to become inquiring, reflective practitioners.*** The American Federation of Teachers' Center for Restructuring is conceptualizing and developing models of professional practice schools where novice and experienced teachers can be educated (Levine, 1988). These schools, also known as professional development schools (Holmes Group, 1990) and clinical schools (Carnegie Corp., 1986), are paradigms of restructured schools. Professional practice schools are envisioned as real-world schools where new kinds of institutional structures can be developed, tested, and disseminated; structures which support practice that is inquiring, reflective, and knowledge based (Levine, 1988).

  The National Education Association's Mastery-in-Learning Project (MILP), is working to provide teachers with skills and resources to restructure their schools into "self-renewing centers of inquiry" (Tuthill et al., 1987). One component of the training of model teacher-facilitators in Dayton (OH) is self- and teaching-awareness (Hopfengardner and Leahy, 1987). Teachers are encouraged to examine and reflect upon their own practice, as a basis for personal and professional growth.

- ***Inservice programs are emphasizing collegiality.*** Teacher isolation has been identified as a major deterrent to purposeful change in schooling (Hopfengardner and Leahy, 1987; Zimpher and Reiger, 1988; Carnegie Corp., 1986). Classroom structure, limited time for noninstructional activities, and top-down decision making contribute to conditions that make it difficult for teachers to work collaboratively with other teachers and staff (Goodlad, 1984).

  The Dayton school district's pilot program seeks to develop a "self-perpetuating collegial network." This teacher-led peer networking project is designed to prepare teacher-facilitators who are able to guide the individual staff development of their building and district colleagues. The program's focus is peer coaching, which emphasizes systematic analysis and improvement of instruction (Hopfengardner and Leahy, 1987). At St. Petersburg High School (SPHS) a faculty-designed and implemented in-house program, Teachers Teaching Teachers, fosters collegiality through its coaching component (Tuthill et al., 1987).

- ***Inservice programs are preparing teachers to participate in decision making on varied school issues.*** Traditionally structured schools are perceived to underutilize experienced teachers (Carnegie Corp., 1986). Partial blame can be assigned to the "industrial/ hierarchical management philosophy in education" (Tuthill et al., 1987). Within such a framework, teachers are not typically partners in decision making about noninstructional aspects of school life. Inservice efforts to change this hierarchical structure are underway at SPHS, where a joint faculty/administration committee has brainstormed strategies to "de-industrialize" school administration (Tuthill et al., 1987).

  Utilization of teacher expertise in decision making has implications beyond democratizing the school environment. To

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acquire professional status, teachers must have the professional autonomy, discretion, and authority characteristic of other professions; including the right to make key decisions about the services they render (Carnegie Corp., 1986).

• ***Inservice programs are helping teachers qualify for professional advancement through differentiated staffing programs.*** Career ladder and merit pay programs reflect a significant reform theme: a differentiated teacher corps can contribute to effective schooling and attainment of professional rewards and status for teachers (Carnegie Corp., 1986; Goodlad, 1984). Inservice programs have responded by preparing teachers to assume new roles and functions.

The MILP provides teachers with opportunities to qualify themselves for advancement through the state's career ladder program. These opportunities include: working as consultants, publishing articles, presenting conference papers, teaching, managing budgets, and supervising staff (Tuthill et al., 1987). In the Master Teacher Model Training Program, classroom teachers are being trained to perform peer evaluations, serve as model teachers, undertake research, plan staff development activities, and develop curricula and instructional materials (Mahlios et al., 1987).

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